



## **Men Against Violence Against Women**

45 River Estate Circular, River Estate, Diego Martin, Trinidad.

Hot Lines: 637-0924, 668-5133. 753-0804 Fax: 637-0924.

Email: [mavawsec@yahoo.com](mailto:mavawsec@yahoo.com). Website: <http://www.mavaw.com>



**DIRECTORS:** Christopher Holder, CHAIRMAN. Donald Berment, SECRETARY. Desmond Persad, TREASURER.

**Date:** Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2004 **Our Ref.:** mavaw/PDW-ja-1

**Your Ref:**

**Mr. Peter Douglas Weller, PhD,  
Clinical Psychologist,  
University Counseling Service,  
University of the West Indies, Mona,  
11 Gibraltar Camp Road,  
Kingston 7,  
JAMAICA.**

**SUBJECT: CARIBBEAN MEN'S  
GROUPS AND BATTERER'S  
INTERVENTIONS.**

Hello Peter,

Thank you for your kind attention and invitation to contribute to this new *Men's Group* in Jamaica and your Report preparation for UNIFEM's review meeting in December 2004. Men of **MAVAW** are always extremely excited to participate in the growth and development of "*The Men's Movement*," which commenced over 50 years ago Internationally, fuelled by the example of the most holistic Gender Sensitive man known to date, Jesus Christ.

The *Men's Groups* known by us in the Caribbean are: -

Trinidad and Tobago—ARTOM (The Association For The Reorientation And Transformation Of Masculinity)—Men (Men's Enlightened Network) not active and of course us.

Jamaica—Father's Incorporated.

Barbados—National Men's Fellowships Association.

St. Lucia—The Mother's and Father's Union.

Belize—Brothers of BOWAND.

Suriname—ManmitMan.

Guyana—Men Against Violence Against Women.

Trinidad **MAVAW** sat on the Cabinet Appointed Committee to review our Domestic Violence Legislation, Act No 10 of 1991 to our new Act No 27 Of 1999. We also sat on the just completed Cabinet Appointed Committee to examine the Institution of the Family in Trinidad and Tobago.

What has resonated to a high degree in these deliberations, both over 12 months duration, is the need to reconsider the Terminology used in the "*Violence Reduction Movement*" and attempt to truncate the Gender and other polarization consequences, which accrue from words like "*Batterer*," *Victim*," "*Perpetrator*," etc.

It is now accepted Internationally, that dysfunctional behaviour in Democratic Societies, has been researched, presented and documented individually by disciplines within the Medical, Social, Food and Building Sciences. Psychologists (like yourself) Psychiatrists, Internists, Nutritionists, Building Biologists, Interior Designers & Decorators and Housing Specialists (like me), have already recorded/accumulated a tremendous amount of research/experience in their respective disciplines.

Unfortunately, this valuable effort is only utilised individually in order to strategize for *Violence Reduction* in societies, which in my view has allowed the creation of a Peaceful Culture to elude us to date.

Over the past 2 years, Trinidad and Tobago's, **Men Against Violence Against Women** has been presenting this accumulated effort as a means to face "Head On" the Roots of Societal Violence. We call it **The BSD Syndrome**, which gives due respect to the work already done in the individual disciplines listed above, providing a path for a Unified Approach to **Violence Reduction**, eliminating the Terminology that has been the source of polarization, replacing it with **Belief System Deficit and Development, Behaviour Skill Deficit and Development, Baggage System Dependency and Development and Biological System Deficit and Development, or for short "A BSD"**

Although, **The BSD Syndrome** is a simple solution of Structure, it will require the input of all the relevant professionals, in order to present the final work in Book form for dissemination to the public. The presentation for the Academic Community is about ¾% complete, funding a major concern. Sadly, men working in this arena do not obtain adequate funds to do what is necessary. We were offered coffee, juice and finger-food on those Cabinet Appointed Committees mentioned above, not even free Internet Access to our Community Based North West Location to do Caribbean and International Collaborations, like this. Not to be daunted by this reality however, Peter, it will be fantastic if I can get you to be excited about this eclectic Syndrome as I am and interest you in providing a Chapter in the proposed Book, suggested Title **"Roots Of Societal Violence—A Male Perspective: Understanding The BSD Syndrome"**.

With respect to the Intervention Programmes you are interested in, there is not much to offer locally or in the Caribbean, which originates from the Judiciary. Brief mention is made of Counseling Programmes in our Domestic Violence Legislation and we have a new Family Court System that depends heavily on Counselling and Mediation.

We also have active NGO's, 1,630 registered at last count, in 15 Municipal Regions and a Ministry of Community Development and Gender Affairs, which over the past five years, have been seriously attempting to educate both men and women on the concepts of Gender and Gender in Development. The financial commitment to this work is however heavily skewed to the female component of the Gender Arena. In our last Budget, 2004-2005, the sum of \$9.7M TT was allocated for several women development projects and \$160,000 TT for one male development project, in spite of the glaring statistics of young male crime, deaths, suicides and poor school attendance.

However, I spent 5 months in Canada (November 1999 to April 2000) completing a self-funded Development Research Project, using the REM (Ripple Effect Model), titled **"Violence Reduction Strategies in a Large Multicultural, Racially/Tribally Diverse Country—Using the RET Model"**. Funds were not and still are not available to present this work for academic scrutiny. But in Canada, you will find NGO, State and Judicial Intervention Programmes, many of which target the male population.

The List of Websites below provides valuable material, for both pro-feminist and pro-masculine research:

[www.xyonline.net](http://www.xyonline.net)      [www.michaelkaufman.com](http://www.michaelkaufman.com)      [www.endabuse.org/bpi](http://www.endabuse.org/bpi)      [www.mavaw.com](http://www.mavaw.com)  
[www.web.net/womensHRights](http://www.web.net/womensHRights)      [www.menweb.org](http://www.menweb.org)      [www.sheridanhill.com/Batteredmen.html](http://www.sheridanhill.com/Batteredmen.html)  
[www.csulb.edu/~mfiebert/assault.htm](http://www.csulb.edu/~mfiebert/assault.htm)      [www.resourcesforfathers.org](http://www.resourcesforfathers.org)      [www.menshealthnetwork.org](http://www.menshealthnetwork.org)  
[www.menstudies.com/links.htm](http://www.menstudies.com/links.htm)      [www.achillesheel.freeuk.com/index.html](http://www.achillesheel.freeuk.com/index.html)      [www.profeminist.org](http://www.profeminist.org)  
[www.cyfc.umn.edu/Fathernet](http://www.cyfc.umn.edu/Fathernet)      [www.unicef.org/reseval/malsr.htm](http://www.unicef.org/reseval/malsr.htm).

Best of luck with your future work and I welcome further discussion on the project and the development of a coordinated and collaborative Caribbean approach in both areas. Please remember the movement for Terminological Changes. Our website (under construction listed above) will give you more information.

Signed .....DONALD BERMENT Secretary MAVAW.

***Yours In Nation Building***  
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***G.M. Co-ordinators: David Law, Johnny Bharath,***  
***P.O.R.O.***